

Meeting Requirements for Continuing Qualifications
for Practice for License Renewal Guidelines

- I. Purpose: To provide guidelines for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses to identify acceptable methods to meet continuing qualifications for practice for the purpose of license renewal.
- II. Requirements for continuing qualifications for practice for the purpose of license renewal
 - A. Effective January 1, 2014, Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses licensed in the State of Oklahoma must meet continuing qualifications for practice, **by completing one or more of the following requirements within the past two years** prior to the expiration date of the license:
 1. Employment in a position that requires a registered nurse/practical nurse license with verification of at least 520 work hours; **or**
 2. Completion of at least twenty-four (24) contact hours of continuing education applicable to nursing practice; **or**
 3. Current certification in a nursing specialty area; **or**
 4. Completion of a Board-approved refresher course; **or**
 5. Completion of at least six (6) academic semester credit hours of nursing coursework at the licensee's current level of licensure or higher.
[OAC §485:10-7-3]
 - B. The options for continuing qualifications may not be combined in the same two year period to meet requirements (e.g., a licensee may not submit verification of 260 employment hours and twelve (12) contact hours as proof of eligibility).
 - C. The licensee will be required to verify at the time of license renewal that he/she has met the continuing qualifications for practice within the two year period prior to the license expiration date. If the licensee is audited, supporting documentation must be submitted.
- III. Guidelines for employment
 - A. Employment in a position that requires a registered nurse/practical nurse license with verification of at least 520 work hours within the two year period may be used to meet the requirements for continuing qualifications for practice. Volunteer hours cannot be used to meet the requirement.

- B. If the licensee is audited, an *Employment Verification Form* (#RS-03), completed by the employer, and a copy of the job description must accompany the completed audit form. The job description must verify that nursing licensure is a requirement for the position.
- C. Positions requiring nursing licensure are not limited to clinical positions. Examples of non-clinical positions that may require nursing licensure include, but are not limited to, nurse administrators, case managers, nurse researchers, nurse educators, and positions in nursing policy/regulation.

IV. Guidelines for continuing education contact hours

- A. Contact hours obtained through an accredited approver of continuing education or an approved nursing education program in the State of Oklahoma.
 - 1. In accordance with the Rules of the Oklahoma Board of Nursing [OAC §485:10-1-2], one (1) contact hour is defined as 50 minutes.
- B. Contact hours obtained through academic credit hours.
 - 1. In accordance with the Rules of the Oklahoma Board of Nursing [OAC §485:10-1-2], one (1) academic semester credit hour = 16 contact hours.
- C. Contact hours selected by the licensee must be applicable to nursing practice. A wide variety of topics may be applicable to nursing practice; however, it will be the responsibility of the licensee to demonstrate how the topic is applicable to nursing practice.
- D. Maintenance of documentation
 - 1. If the licensee is audited, the licensee shall submit to the Board office a photocopy of the certificate of completion with a description of the continuing education offering published by the provider (such as a photocopy of the program brochure). The accredited approver of the continuing education or the approved nursing education program must be listed on the certificate of completion or program brochure.
 - 2. Each licensee is responsible for maintaining documentation of continuing education contact hours throughout the two year renewal period.
 - 3. Each licensee is responsible for ensuring appropriate accreditation of the provider or approver.
 - 4. Each licensee is responsible for maintaining documentation throughout the two year renewal period of academic semester hours of non-nursing coursework to verify completion of contact hours of continuing education applicable to nursing practice.

V. Guidelines for certification in a nursing specialty area

- A. Current certification in a nursing specialty area may be used to validate continuing qualifications for practice.
- B. The nursing certification must be issued by an accredited nursing certification program.
- C. If the licensee is audited, a copy of the certificate must be provided.

VI. Guidelines for a Board-approved refresher course

- A. If the licensee has completed a Board-approved refresher course within the two-year renewal period, the certificate of completion may be used to verify continuing qualifications for practice.
- B. A list of refresher courses approved by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing may be found at:
<http://www.oklahoma.gov/nursing/education-program-types.html>
- C. If the licensee is audited, a copy of the certificate of completion must accompany the completed audit form.

VII. Guidelines for academic semester credit hours of nursing coursework

- A. If the licensee has completed at least six (6) academic semester credit hours of nursing coursework at the licensee's current level of licensure or higher, this education may be used at the time of license renewal to verify continuing qualifications for practice.
- B. Nursing coursework is defined as coursework taken as a part of the curriculum of a nursing education program leading to licensure and/or an advanced degree in nursing. General education and support courses cannot be used. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Coursework in a program leading to a degree in nursing issued by a board-approved nursing education program completed by a Licensed Practical Nurse
 - 2. Coursework in a baccalaureate level nursing education program completed by a Registered Nurse with an associate degree
 - 3. Coursework in a program leading to a graduate degree in nursing completed by a Registered Nurse
- C. If the licensee is audited, a copy of the transcript must accompany the completed audit form.

VIII. **Regulatory Authority: OAC §485:10-7-3**